

REMARKS

This is in response to the Office Action dated March 7, 2006. In view of the foregoing amendments and following representations, reconsideration is respectfully requested.

By the above amendment, claims 1, 4-8 and 13-15 are cancelled; claim 9 is amended; and claims 16-21 are newly added. Accordingly, claims 2-3, 9-12 and 16-21 are currently pending in the present application.

Initially, the objection to claim 14 has been rendered moot in view of the cancellation of claim 14.

Next, it is noted with appreciation that the Examiner has indicated that claims 10-12 would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims. The subject matter considered allowable by the Examiner is included in each of new independent claims 16 and 19. Accordingly, claims 16 and 19, along with dependent claims 17-18 and 20-21, are clearly allowable over the prior art of record.

Accordingly, the sole remaining issue is the rejection of claim 9 under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Wallis (U.S. Patent No. 5,197,718).

Independent claim 9 has been amended to recite that the cushion pin is interposed between a work and a die cushion.

In general, a die cushion includes a die cushion pad that is pushed downward by the pressing force of the slide. The die cushion pad is supported from below by means of a

pneumatic cylinder, hydraulic cylinder, etc., whereby the die cushion pad produces a pushing force in the upward direction when it is moving downward. In other words, the die cushion has a cushion function and serves as a cushion. As a means for transmitting the pressing force of the slide to the die cushion, a plurality of cushion pins are employed. The present invention is directed to the cushion pins serving as the pressing force transmitting means.

In the press machine shown in Figs. 5 and 6 of **Wallis**, the configurations that have a cushion function are the configuration denoted by "symbol R" and the configuration denoted by the "numeral 10". On the other hand, the configuration denoted by the "symbol B", which the Examiner asserts is a die cushion, is nothing but a thick plate that has no cushion function. In other words, the press machine of **Wallis** does not include a die cushion. Die cushion pins are employed if a die cushion is provided. Thus, without a die cushion, there are naturally provided no cushion pins in the press machine of **Wallis**. Therefore, it is submitted that claim 9, which is directed to a cushion pin interposed between a work and the die cushion, cannot be anticipated by the **Wallis** reference.

In view of the above, it is submitted that the present application is now clearly in condition for allowance. The Examiner therefore is requested to pass this case to issue.

In the event that the Examiner has any comments or suggestions of a nature necessary to place this case in condition for allowance, then the Examiner is requested to contact Applicant's undersigned attorney by telephone to promptly resolve any remaining matters.

Respectfully submitted,

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